

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 JUSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-01 DHA-02
/051 W

-----040801Z 063278 /14

R 032235Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO AEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7662
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2578

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, CS
SUBJECT: LOCAL POLILRCIAN FIRES SHOTS AT VESCO HOUSE/OFFICE COMPLEX

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. SUMMARY: FULFILLING AN OFTEN EXPRESSED PROMISE,
MAVERICK POLITICIAN G. W. VILLALOBOS SHOT UP ROBERT VESCO'S
OFFICE/HOUSE COMPLEX NEAR SAN JOSE JUNE 2. WELL ADVERTISED
EVENT CARRIED ON RADIO AND T.V. RECEIVED GOOD PRESS

COVERAGE. NOBODY WAS INJURED, PROPERTY DAMAGE MINIMAL,
AND VILLALOBOS ARRESTED. MOST COSTA RICANS DENOUNCE STUNT.
END SUMMARY.

2. COSTA RICA'S INFAMOUS MAVERICK POLITICIAN, GERARDO
WENCESLAO (G.W.) VILLALOBOS WRAPPED HIMSELF IN A COSTA
RICAN FLAG JUNE 2, AND FIRED APPROXIMATELY 40 SHOTS AT
ROBERT VESCO'S OFFICE/HOUSE COMPLEX IN THE SAN JOQUIS
SUBURB OF CURRIDABAT. BETWEEN SHOTS HE CURSED AND
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CHALLENGED VESCO AND SHOUTED PATRIOTIC SLOGANS.
VILLALOBOS' "ATTACK" WAS CARRIED LIVE ON RADIO AND
BY DELAYED TAPE ON T.V. AS HE HAD ADVISED LOCAL MEDIA
REPRESENTATIVES OF HIS INTENTIONS EARLIER IN THE
DAY. PRESS COVERAGE WAS ALSO EXTENSIVE.

3. VILLALOBOS, WHO OBTAINED MORE VOTES FOR PRESIDENT

IN 1974 THAN THE COMMUNIST CANDIDATES, AND WHO IS KNOWN FOR HIS OFFBEAT PUBLICITY STUNTS, SEVERAL WEEKS AGO ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION PERSONALLY TO EXPEL VESCO FROM HIS HOME AND COSTA RICA IF THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT--USING FORCE IF NECESSARY. HE WARNED OVER PAST WEEKS HE WOULD CARRY OUT THREAT.

4. A NUMBER OF SPECTATORS, IN ADDITION TO MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES, GATHERED TO WATCH "G.W." NO ONE TRIED TO STOP HIM. SOME SHOUTED EXPRESSIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT. AFTER HIS AMMO WAS USED UP, THE PRESS INTERVIEWED HIM UNTIL THE POLICE ARRIVED AND ARRESTED HIM.

5. MINISTER OF SECURITY CHARPENTIER TOLD THE PRESS VILLALOBOS WOULD BE ARRAIGNED AND CHARGED. DECLARING THAT VILLALOBOS HAD A PATHOLOGICAL PROBLEM, HE CHASTIZED THE PRESS FOR THEIR TREATMENT OF THE INCIDENT. THE MINISTER SAID HE WILL INVESTIGATE THE REASONS IT TOOK THE POLICE SO LONG TO REACT. CHARPENTIER ADDED: "I DO NOT SUPPORT VESCO AND WANT HIM TO LEAVE THIS COUNTRY BUT I CANNOT PERMIT CITIZENS TO TAKE THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS."

6. LOCAL POLITICIANS AND OTHERS HAVE REGISTERED ACROSS THE BOARD DISGUST WITH VILLALOBOS' ACTION; THEY SAID IT GOES COUNTER TO COSTA RICA'S DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL TRADITIONS, IS DAMAGING TO THE NATION'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE, AND COULD HAVE HURT SOMEONE. FOR HIS PART, CONFIDENTIAL

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VILLALOBOS WARNED THAT HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS FIGHT AGAINST VESCO.

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7. COMMENT: AFTER INITIAL HUMOROUS REACTION COSTA RICANS HAVE REALIZED THAT "G.W.'S" SHOOT-EM-UP MAY NOT BE SO FUNNY. FIRING INTO VESCO'S EMPTY PARKED CARS IS ONE THING, BUT SHOOTING INTO HIS LIVING/WORK COMPOUND IS QUITE ANOTHER. AS A RESULT, VESCO WILL BE ABLE ONCE AGAIN TO POINT TO EVIDENCE OF "PERSECUTION" AND TO JUSTIFY HIS NEED FOR ARMED PROTECTION. IT IS NOT UNSURPRISING, THAT SOME OPPOSITION POLITICIANS ARE ALREADY SPECULATING THAT VESCO STAGED IT. KILDAY

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: SAN JOSE
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770692/aaaadcyn.tel
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